

RECORD OF DECISION
BIG GRIZZLY FOREST HEALTH AND FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST
GEORGETOWN RANGER DISTRICT
EL DORADO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

DECISION

Based on my review of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), I have decided to implement Modified Alternative 1, which includes a number of activities, including commercial thinning, stand improvement harvesting, planting, tractor piling, herbicide treatments, mastication, and prescribed burning. The resource protection measures described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS (pages 21 to 29) will be fully incorporated into project implementation. In addition, monitoring is included as an integral part of this project, and will be carried out as described in Chapter 2 (pages 29 to 31) of the FEIS. All practicable means of avoiding or minimizing environmental harm have been adopted (40 CFR 1505.2(c)) for this project, as described in the FEIS.

Prior to making my decision, I reviewed the purpose and need, proposed action, alternatives, environmental consequences, public comments and visited the project area. I believe Modified Alternative 1 provides a reasonable balance between forest health and fuel reduction benefits and potential effects on California spotted owl Home Range Core Areas (HRCAs).

Scientific findings continue to support the effects of climate change in the environment, although there are scientists who believe that recent climate changes are a consequence of long-term cyclical weather patterns. I believe Modified Alternative 1 provides forest health and fuel reduction benefits that will increase the landscape's overall resiliency to natural and human threats and pressures, and accommodate some of the predicted consequences of climate change.

I have carefully reviewed all of the arguments and evidence that support or oppose the use of herbicides for this project. This review included all of the public comments received during scoping and public meetings, comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the scientific basis for the use of herbicides described in the FEIS, results of other projects that have used herbicides on the Eldorado National Forest, and my own understanding of the field conditions in the project area. The analysis in the FEIS thoroughly displays all expected effects and indicates that the specific herbicides analyzed are environmentally appropriate as proposed. Within the context of identified issues, the best available science indicates the use of herbicides is appropriate and essential to meet the purpose and need of the Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project.

DECISION RATIONALE

It is my experience that decisions on resource issues often must be made without a clear consensus among all interested parties. Such decisions must consider our scientific and professional knowledge of the land, the resources, and the needs and wishes of the American public. Although planning efforts on the Eldorado National Forest have addressed management issues and fostered public participation in public land management, it is apparent that some controversy remains.

Considering the comments received from the public, I reviewed the DEIS and concluded the preferred alternative in the DEIS (Alternative 1) did not adequately respond to the public concern and comment that intensive logging of spotted owl HRCAs and reducing high quality nesting habitat, including six HRCAs that

and need for this project. I recognize that this balancing of potential beneficial and adverse effects requires tradeoffs:

- Modified Alternative 1 would result in an increase in stand vigor, a reduction in the stand density index, and a reduction in risk of high levels of insect related mortality in the majority of the treated stands.
- Stand densities in the 7 units where thinning intensity was decreased (compared to Alternative 1) would not be reduced to a level below the threshold of concern for pine indicating that ponderosa pine, sugar pine, Douglas-fir and black oak would still remain at increased risk from drought and insects. Given that these areas already have a limited supply of moisture and nutrients; excessive numbers of trees will continue to limit tree growth. Therefore, on average, growth rates in some stands under Modified Alternative 1 are expected to be lower than with the Proposed Action. However, some benefits to individual tree growth would still be expected due to reduced competition related to micro-site improvement.
- Competition for resources on the 434 acres that would not be thinned at all under Modified Alternative 1 (compared to Alternative 1) would remain high and the stands would remain above the threshold of concern based on the stand density index.
- Modified Alternative 1 would accomplish 3,147 acres of Strategically Placed Landscape Area Treatments (SPLATs). The areas treated would reduce surface fuel loadings and reduce ladder fuels within the units. Compared to Alternative 1, flame lengths on the acres not thinned or where thinning intensities are reduced would be greater than 4 feet during 90th percentile weather. The untreated acres would remain in their current condition and susceptible to a high severity fire event.
- Compared to Alternative 1, Modified Alternative 1 would directly reduce impacts on 705 acres of California spotted owl HRCAs by eliminating thinning on these acres at this time. In addition, compared to Alternative 1, impacts to the HRCAs would be reduced in those stands where the harvest prescriptions were modified with reduced diameter limits for removal and additional emphasis upon maintaining structural diversity in the form of retention areas within these stands.
- Alternative 4, compared to Modified Alternative 1, would have a slightly reduced, potential short-term, adverse effect in HRCAs by a further reduction in proposed treatments compared to Modified Alternative 1. However, I feel that the avoidance of fuels treatment in a number of fuel-laden stands would result in an unacceptable risk of the associated HRCA's to wildfire.
- Considering the available data on the California spotted owl, the direct, indirect and cumulative effects for Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5, and Modified Alternative 1 are not expected to result in a trend toward Federal listing primarily because the project affects only a small portion of the species range and because of the emphasis upon maintaining structural diversity in the form of retention areas, creations of gaps beneath large, legacy pines, and maintaining individual trees and groups important from a stand diversity standpoint. Because of the extent of treatment in eight HRCAs under Alternatives 1, 3, 5, and Modified Alternative 1, and six HRCAs in Alternative 4 there is the potential for

short-term effects on spotted owls shifting their territories, however, it is not expected that any alternative would result in a reduction in overall owl populations in the area.

- Modified Alternative 1 is expected to generate over \$800,000 less than Alternative 1. This means that over \$400,000 in additional allocated funding, retained receipts, or other funding would be needed to remove the commercial products and accomplish the needed road work, in addition to the funds needed to accomplish the other prescribed treatments. The net result is that nearly \$475,000 in additional funding would be required than with Alternative 1 in order to accomplish 512 acres less treatment. However, it is important to note that all of the action alternatives would need additional funding to be fully implemented. The value of commercial sized material removed through thinning would offset/reduce the cost of implementing Alternatives 1 and 3. Alternatives 4, 5 and Modified Alternative 1 are not expected to generate enough value from commercial sized material removed through thinning to offset the cost of implementation. The estimated dollars generated and costs of implementation will ultimately be determined through the formal appraisal and bidding processes. Volume and value figures expressed in this ROD, the FEIS and the Economic Analysis are based upon current market conditions and general volume estimates. I recognize the final volumes are subject to change based upon final timber marking and the related economic values are subject to change as the lumber markets fluctuate both locally and nationally.

Overall, my principal aim is the clear need to protect the basic resources, primarily soil, water, wildlife and vegetation from not only the predicted effects of our proposed activities, but from the potential effects of wildfire as well. The over-riding objective of this project is to reduce the effects of a potential wildfire. The emphasis upon management actions designed to reduce the adverse effects of wildfire in California and throughout the west is evidenced by both national policy and direction. I agree with the high level of emphasis that the ID Team and the Forest Service have placed upon this objective. I am all too familiar with the tremendous resource damage and rehabilitation challenges that inevitably follow in the aftermath of major wildfire events. Catastrophic wildfires regularly occur on the Eldorado National Forest and the relevant landscape area is replete with the evidence of the resource impacts that such fires pose.

Any action, significant enough to truly make a change in the future trajectory of forest conditions on a landscape basis will inherently have some short-term and perhaps long-term risks. In the case of this project, I believe the risks have been recognized, analyzed and effectively mitigated. Some might suggest that I should proceed with more caution, be less aggressive or be more conservative; in effect do less than what is proposed in Modified Alternative 1. I am sensitive to these concerns and I have considered the question of not only how much treatment is too much, but conversely at what point is a planned treatment level too little to actually change fire behavior on a landscape basis. I must balance predicted risks and expected benefits and I have decided that on this project the risks are reasonably predictable and can be effectively mitigated. Similarly, the risks associated with wildfire are also apparent to me. It is a matter of common knowledge that many of the resource impacts caused by wildfire are not easily mitigated or repaired.

I recognize that my decision may not satisfy all public interests; however, I believe a more balanced decision has been made because the public participated in this process.

ISSUES

The issues discussed below are relative to the action alternatives analyzed in detail, and include my rationale for not selecting the alternatives.

Issue 1: Negative effects to wildlife and forest users could result from exposure of forest users and wildlife to glyphosate due to inert ingredients contained in the products and the ability of the pesticide to cause genetic damage.

Risks to Humans:

The FEIS assesses the risks to human health (FEIS, pages 185 to 197). With the design features of Modified Alternative 1, including the adherence to all appropriate laws and regulations governing the use of pesticides, implementation of Modified Alternative 1 poses a low risk to human health and safety for both workers and the public (FEIS, pages 196-197). The site specific risk assessment (project file) uses standard methodology widely accepted by the scientific community, and the most recent toxicological information available. It is based on a full review of existing credible scientific information.

Risks to Wildlife

Effects on wildlife have been thoroughly analyzed in the FEIS and in the Biological Evaluations (BEs). The BEs found that no federally listed Threatened or Endangered species will be adversely affected by Modified Alternative 1. The BEs also determined that Modified Alternative 1 will not cause a trend toward listing of any sensitive species that occur within the project area. Using the project design features, herbicide applications will pose a low overall risk to aquatic and terrestrial species. Accidental spills could potentially result in some risk to susceptible species or their food supply. However, the Best Management Practices in the project design would prevent or reduce the effects of a spill.

To an extent, I favored Modified Alternative 1 because a reduction in competition to plantation trees through treatment of competing brush and reduced tree density is expected to increase height and diameter growth, and reduce the risk of mortality from wildfire and insect attack. The rate of stem volume production and height growth are expected to appreciably increase within 5 years with increased availability of nutrients and water. As a result, retained trees are expected to reach full canopy closure considerably sooner than with no treatment, better enabling trees to out compete brush in the future and more quickly provide components for old forest structure development that are deemed important to wildlife.

Alternative 3 was specifically developed to address Issue 1. Treatments under Alternative 3 would not use herbicides; therefore Alternative 3 would result in no risk to humans or wildlife from herbicide use. Alternative 2 would also result in no risk to humans or wildlife from herbicide use. I did not select Alternative 2 because it doesn't address the purpose and need for action. I did not select Alternative 3 because mastication with no follow-up herbicide application in plantations would have limited success in controlling competing brush even with a second follow-up mastication treatment due to the vigorous resprouting of competing brush species. Although, mastication would immediately reduce the brush component in treated stands, mastication of heavy compositions of re-sprouting brush would result in little to no short or long-

term control of brush competition within the stands. With continued brush competition, tree growth within these stands would remain slow and risk of loss to wildfire would remain high.

Issue 3: Unnecessary and avoidable habitat degradation such as removal of trees to 30 inches has the potential to increase fragmentation and reduce habitat within the project area which could threaten viability of owl and other sensitive species.

Modified Alternative 1 addresses this issue by eliminating commercial harvest on 434 acres, reducing diameter limits of harvested trees on 384 acres, and changing the prescription from thinning to prescribed fire on 60 acres within HRCAs where combined treatment acres would impact greater than 20 percent of the total HRCA acres. Reducing diameter limits and changing prescriptions will continue to provide for effective fuel reduction on the 384 acres with modified prescriptions that are important for maintaining effectiveness of fuel treatments to modify fire behavior to reduce the threat of high intensity wildland fire destroying HRCA habitat. I selected Modified Alternative 1 because it provides a balance in terms of meeting the purpose and need while also responding to public comments received on the DEIS by providing appropriate protection to HRCA habitat.

Alternative 4 was specifically developed to address Issue 3. Compared to Alternative 1, commercial thinning was eliminated from 820 acres of identified California spotted owl habitat. The 820 acres were deleted where such thinning represented a large percentage of any individual California spotted owl HRCA. Alternative 4 would affect six HRCAs and the potential for short-term effects on spotted owls by causing a shifting of their territories with this alternative. The potential shifting of owl territories exists as well with the other action alternatives, however, it is not expected that any alternative would result in a reduction in overall owl populations in the area.

I did not select Alternative 4 because the reduction of 820 acres of thinning from below (compared to Alternative 1) would not sufficiently reduce fire behavior within the project area. Within the acres eliminated from thinning, a wildfire could burn at higher severity through larger portions of the project area due to continuity and arrangement of surface and aerial fuel loads, as simulated by fire behavior modeling. The reduction of treatment acres could result in the potential high intensity burning of HRCA habitat in the event of a wildland fire.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The key elements of the Purpose and Need are (the entire Purpose and Need is described on pages 1 to 4 in Chapter 1 of the FEIS):

- need to change existing forest surface, ladder and crown fuel profiles in order to reduce potential wildfire intensity and behavior to mitigate the consequences of large, potentially damaging wildfires on selected forested areas;
- need to increase forest resilience by improving stand vigor and resistance to disease and insect mortality in degraded stands;
- need to restore portions of the forest to the composition of tree species and size classes that are closer to the historic conditions for the area and are likely to be more sustainable into the future considering the biophysical and climatic conditions of the area; and

- need to treat hazardous fuels and implement forest health improvements in a cost-effective manner to maximize program effectiveness and ensure that sufficient treatments occur to have a reasonable likelihood of changing landscape fire behavior and providing improved landscape-scale forest resilience.

All action alternatives (Alternatives 1, 3, 4, 5 and Modified Alternative 1) reduce potential wildfire intensity, increase forest resilience by improving stand vigor and resistance to disease and insect mortality, restore portions of the forest to the composition of tree species and size classes that are closer to the historic conditions for the area, and treat hazardous fuels and implement forest health improvements to varying degrees.

The following table shows a brief summary of the key objectives I considered while making my decision. While Modified Alternative 1 does not maximize the achievement of the objectives, Modified Alternative 1 achieves the purpose and need elements at a level between alternatives 1 and 4 while providing a balanced response to public comments on the DEIS.

Table 1. Comparison of Ability of Action Alternatives to Meet Purpose and Need Objectives.

Elements of the Purpose and Need	Alternative 1	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Modified Alternative 1
Acres of flame length less than 4 feet during 90 th percentile weather within treatment units	5,431	5,429	4,847	5,431	More than 4,847 but less than 5,431
Stand Vigor, Stand Density Index, and Risk of Mortality within treated stands	Majority of stands would be below the Threshold of Concern for ponderosa pine, thereby increasing stand vigor and reducing risk of insect and disease mortality	Majority of stands would be below the Threshold of Concern for ponderosa pine, thereby increasing stand vigor and reducing risk of insect and disease mortality	Same as Alternative 1 except competition for resources on 820 acres not thinned would remain high. These stands would remain above the Threshold of Concern.	Majority of stands would be above the Threshold of Concern, indicating increased risk of mortality from insect attack and reduced vigor from heavy competition	Same as Alternative 1 except competition for resources on 434 acres not thinned would remain high. These stands would remain above the Threshold of Concern.
Ability to promote species composition of shade intolerant Pines and Oak in treated stands	Increased by favoring shade intolerant species within all commercially thinned units.	Increased by favoring shade intolerant species in commercial thinning units, limited in plantations because of limited effectiveness of mastication treatments without follow-up herbicides.	Increased by favoring shade intolerant species in commercial thinning units, no changes on 820 acres not thinned.	Essentially no change in existing species composition due to limited thinning intensity.	Increased by favoring shade intolerant species in commercial thinning units,, no changes on 434 acres
Expected Effectiveness on Controlling Brush Re-growth in Plantations	>10 years	<5 years	>10 years	>10 years	>10 years

Elements of the Purpose and Need	Alternative 1	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Modified Alternative 1
Total Additional Cost Compared to Alternative 1 to Complete Treatments	\$0	\$220,003	\$120,005	\$2,069,630	\$475,052
Acres of Treatment Accomplished	5,726	5,697	4,813	5,726	5,214
Average Cost Per Acre for Treatment	\$520	\$560	\$645	\$880	\$695

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A notice of intent to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on March 11, 2009. In addition, the proposed action was listed in the Eldorado National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions since April 2006 and updated periodically during the environmental analysis. A detailed scoping letter outlining general existing conditions, proposed treatments, and acres planned for treatments was mailed on January 20th 2009 to 37 individuals, organizations, and government entities. The Big Grizzly project file contains public letters, records of phone calls and visits to the area, mailing lists, and other documentation of the outreach and discussions held with members of the public,

The following issues were identified from scoping comments and were used to determine the scope of the analysis.

- Negative effects to wildlife and forest users could result from exposure of forest users and wildlife to glyphosate due to inert ingredients contained in the products and the ability of the pesticide to cause genetic damage.
- Commercial logging and the use of heavy equipment has the potential to damage aquatic resources.
- Unnecessary and avoidable habitat degradation such as removal of trees to 30 inches has the potential to increase fragmentation and reduce habitat within the project area which could threaten viability of owl and other sensitive species.

A full description of issues significant to the proposed action appears in the FEIS on page 16.

A DEIS was published for review and comment on February 5, 2010. In response to the Forest's request for comments, the public and other agencies submitted 8 individual letters. The FEIS includes the comments from these letters and the Forest Service response to these comments in Appendix E.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

In addition to the selected alternative, (Modified Alternative 1), I considered 5 other alternatives

approximately 890 acres, masticate and herbicide 22 acres within unit 320-43, precommercial thin and masticate approximately 107 acres, masticate and herbicide approximately 975 acres of plantations, masticate and herbicide approximately 75 acres in a 47 year old plantation, prescribe burn approximately 660 acres, construct approximately 1 mile of road, and reconstruct approximately 57 miles of roads.

Alternative 2 – No Action

Alternative 3 – All acres would remain the same as the Proposed Action except 29 acres proposed for treatment with herbicide as the initial treatment would be dropped from the project. Rather than using herbicide, mastication and hand release would be substituted as the follow up treatment on 1,123 acres.

Alternative 4 – Compared to the Proposed Action, this alternative eliminates commercial thinning on 820 acres of identified California spotted owl habitat. The 820 acres of changes is directed at those units where commercial thinning represented a large percentage of any individual California spotted owl HRCA. Additionally, compared to the Proposed Action, 93 acres of prescribed burn only units would not be burned.

Alternative (5) Non-commercial – Treatment units proposed would remain the same as the Proposed Action; however, in Alternative 5 those units proposed for commercial thinning would have only material necessary to meet fuels objectives removed. In general, this would result in a 12 inch maximum diameter limit for removal; however, in order to facilitate equipment access to treat the units effectively, there could be circumstances where larger than 12 inch trees would be removed.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

NEPA requires federal agencies to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments received during the planning process provided suggestions for alternative methods for achieving the Purpose and Need. Several alternatives were considered, but eliminated from detailed study (FEIS, pages 31 to 38) because they did not meet the stated purpose and need for the project.

12 inch DBH Limit with No Gap Expansion – Treatments proposed would remain the same as the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) except that units proposed for commercial thinning in Alternative 1 would have a 12 inch maximum diameter limit for removal. Additionally, no gap expansion and no planting with follow-up release treatments would occur in stand improvement units.

16 inch DBH Limit with No Gap Expansion – Treatments proposed would remain the same as the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) except that units proposed for commercial thinning in Alternative 1 would have a 16 inch maximum diameter limit for removal. Additionally, no gap expansion and no planting with follow-up release treatments would occur in stand improvement units.

2001 Framework Alternative – Treatments proposed would remain the same as the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) except that units proposed for commercial thinning in Alternative 1 would

have a 12 inch maximum diameter limit for removal in the 2,978 acres of Old Forest and HRCA land allocations and a 20 inch maximum diameter limit for removal in the 1,010 acres of the General Forest land allocation.

Hand Thinning and Prescribed Fire Alternative – With this alternative no mechanical treatments would occur, which would leave stands proposed for mastication untreated at this time. Precommercial thinning treatments would be implemented by hand. Units proposed for commercial thinning with the Proposed Action would be treated with hand thinning up to 16 inch diameter where needed to introduce prescribed fire. Material would be hand piled and burned before implementation of prescribed fire.

Prescribed Fire Only Alternative - This alternative would use prescribed fire as the only means of treating proposed stands. With this alternative no mechanical treatments would occur, which would leave stands proposed for mastication untreated at this time.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY

- The alternatives discussed in the FEIS meet all of the resource protection requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- This project is consistent with the requirements for riparian areas.
- This project meets the requirements for soil and water.
- Biological Evaluations (BE) were prepared for Forest Service sensitive aquatic wildlife, terrestrial wildlife, and botanical species. The wildlife BEs concluded that the Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project **may affect individuals, but would not likely adversely affect or result in a trend toward Federal Listing or loss of viability** for the California red-legged frog. The Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project **may affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal Listing or loss of viability** for the California spotted owl, Western pond turtle, Foothill yellow-legged frog, Pacific fisher, American marten, Northern goshawk, Pallid bat, and Townsend's big-eared bat. The Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project will **not affect** the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, Yosemite toad, Winter run Chinook salmon, Central valley steelhead, Central valley spring run Chinook salmon, Northern leopard frog, Lahontan cutthroat trout, Hardhead, delta smelt, American peregrine falcon, Great gray owl, Willow flycatcher, Sierra Nevada red fox, American bald eagle, Western red bat, California wolverine, and Valley elderberry longhorn beetle. The sensitive plant BE concluded that the Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project **may affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal Listing or loss of viability** for the sensitive plants *Calochortus clavatus* var. *avius* and *Lewisia kelloggii* ssp. *Kelloggii*. The Big Grizzly Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project will **not affect** *Senecio layneae*, *Allium tribracteatum*, *Arctostaphylos nissenana*, *Balsamorhiza macrolepis* var. *macrolepis*, *Botrychium* spp., *Bruchia bolanderi*, *Cypripedium montanum*, *Draba asterophora* var. *asterophora*, *Draba asterophora* var. *macrocarpa*, *Epilobium howellii*, *Eriogonum tripodium*, *Helodium blandowii*, *Horkelia parryi*, *Hydrotheria venosa*, *Lewisia longipetala*, *Lewisia serrata*, *Lomatium stebbinsii*, *Meesia* spp., *Navarretia prolifera* ssp. *lutea*, and *Phacelia stebbinsii*.

Endangered Species Act

No threatened, endangered or proposed (TEP) species are known to occur within the project area. Although California red-legged frogs have not been detected, habitat in the project area has the potential to support this species, and for analysis purposes it was assumed that California red-legged frogs could occur in the project area. The Biological Assessment for the Big Grizzly project indicates that project design features will eliminate or minimize potential impacts to California red-legged frogs. Furthermore, it has been concluded that the project is expected to have no effect to TEP species outside of the project area. Through consultation with the USFWS it has been determined that the Selected Alternative may affect, but it not likely to adversely affect the California red legged frog.

National Historic Preservation Act

Protection of cultural resource sites will comply with the Programmatic Agreement among the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, California State Historic Preservation Officer, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Office Regarding the Identification, Evaluation

and Treatment of Historic Properties Managed by the National Forest of the Sierra Nevada, California dated 1996 (PA).

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (APPEAL) OPPORTUNITIES

This decision is subject to administrative review (appeal) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215. The appeal must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery) with the Appeal Deciding Officer: Randy Moore, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service, Regional Office R5, 1323 Club Drive Vallejo, CA 94592, fax: (707) 562-9229.

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered appeals are: 8:00 to 4:00, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Electronic appeals must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to appeals-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Appeals, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of this notice in the Mountain Democrat, the newspaper of record. Attachments received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in the mountain Democrat newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal this decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Individuals or organizations who submitted substantive comments during the comment period specified at 215.6 may appeal this decision. The notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

If no appeals are filed within the 45-day time period, implementation of the decision may occur on, but not before, 5 business days from the close of the appeal filing period. When appeals are filed, implementation may occur on, but not before, the 15th business day following the date of the last appeal disposition.

CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision, contact: Dana Walsh, Team Leader, Georgetown Ranger District, 7600 Wentworth Springs Road, Georgetown, CA 95634, 530-333-4312.

/s/ Duane A. Nelson

DUANE A. NELSON

Date

Acting Forest Supervisor

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